

Leghorn, 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1839 Wednesday afternoon. 21

Ever dear Friend

Whenever I have an hour to spare I know of no pleasanter mode of occupying it than by writing to you, for to you my thoughts, whenever they are at rest, spontaneously resort. I have yet an hour before the voluntario starts for Florence, and I may as well commence another sheet, the first of a series which I may be unable to send to you for several weeks, as I here leave the Mediterranean, loveliest of Seas, and except I find an American ship on the Adriatic, which is not very probable, I must keep them all until I reach Hamburg. I have just closed a formidable packet of journal, to be sent from here in the ship Sarah and Arilla, which is to sail for New York next week. The same ship takes a little box containing two Leghorn hats for you, as I have informed you in the letters, and now repeat, to guard against the chance of these letters not reaching you. A packet of Engravings accompanies this also, containing many choice things. There are tolerably cheap at Rome. Vast quantities of pretty Mosaic's are exposed for sale there, but they seem to me dear, and so are the Cameos, of which I saw a great many very pretty ones. I take some credit at refusing to purchase, as I admired them much. There are numerous works of art copied in brown, marble, rosso-antico (a kind of Jasper) &c. - such as ruins of temples, Statues, columns, the Sarcophagus of Scipio &c. which I should like to have, but the price deterred me, though I have no doubt a man who understood Italian and could take the time which it requires to beat these Italians down to reasonable terms might make reasonable purchases. I am very well satisfied with my visit to Rome. In the brief space of time I spent there I saw every thing I wished except the Pope himself - and I believe I had a glimpse of him, - one statue of Michael Angelo's, which I only learned about when it was too late, - the Catacombs, where the early Christians used to conceal themselves, which are some miles off, - the Monument of Cecilia Metella, which is not handsome, but is immortalized by three or four singularly sweet stanzas in Child's Harp, and the Basilica of St. Paul, which is some distance out of the city, and was nearly destroyed by fire about 10 years ago. This is a very small list compared with what I have seen, so I am quite content. I wish you could see Rome; there is so much that you would enjoy in the highest degree; and it is laying up a fund to be enjoyed afterward as long as you live.

Rome, even at this late season, is a more busy and crowded town than I imagined. Priests and monks of every degree and order abound, and they are all stout, oleaginous, truculent fellows, and certainly if they live upon pulse and soup maigre, they are striking examples of the healthful and nourishing ~~quality~~ effect of low diet. The friars are regular Friar Tucks, and instead of mortified countenances, it evidently requires an effort for them to look serious, even when they are in public processions or engaged in their worship. I saw a lay procession of them enter St. Giovanni Laterano - the church where the celebrated Lateran Councils were held - and while a priest was reading a lay service to them, some yawned directly in his face, and those a little in the back-ground took out their snuff-boxes, and helped themselves and offered to their companions with the greatest nonchalance in the world. The Capucian friars are without exception the dirtiest and most disagreeable fellows in appearance I ever beheld. The Dominicans on the other hand are quite petulant in their way, and their light and neat drab-colored tunics put you in mind of Quakers.

Over the doors of almost every church you find a staring inscription "Indulgentia plenaria quotidiana pro vivis et defunctis:" and within bills are posted in which the pope offers indulgence for so many years for every visit to a certain number of churches and saying so many prayers &c. - Mr. Austley told me that he had seen the original and taken a copy of an indulgence which a mischievous young lady of Nice visiting Rome procured from the Pope for a bright friend of hers, granting complete absolution for forty years to the young lady not only, but also to any fifteen other persons, <sup>also</sup> the lady might select among her friends! A document of this kind is graciously signed by the Pope, his seal affixed, and countersigned by his Secretary. I saw myself the Sacred Staircase as they call it which they have the hardihood to call the very stair-case by which our Saviour was taken before Pilate. It is of marble all the steps but the uppermost are covered with wood, and that one is worn half through by the knees of those who continually ascend the flight in this painful and awkward manner. When I saw it, it was crowded with persons of every age and sex, muttering ave & pater during their toilsome ascent, and ludicrous as it looked it was too melancholy to laugh at. When they reach the summit they first kiss the cross carved on the uppermost step

and then go forward to a little chapel, kiss the images before them and mutter a prescribed prayer, a printed copy of which hangs before them. I got among them and began to copy it, but it attracted so much attention that I thought it best to desist. It contained the principles of the superstition, but was not otherwise remarkable. Not far from it was suspended a printed copy of the Papal bull, which in plain words offered plenary indulgence for nine years for each time any person would ascend this staircase upon their bended knees, and say the prescribed number of prayers. I mentioned this to Mr. Hartley who had often heard of it: he went next day to see it, and it was then crowded as when I visited the place the day before. But there is no end to their absurdities, I wish Dr. Brownlee would visit Italy and take notes for a few weeks.

It is now just sunset, and the air is remarkably balmy; a mild sea-breeze, just enough to fan you. And let me tell you, however, as to Italian skies and sunsets that they are not a bit superior to our own. You may enjoy from your own parlor windows finer sunsets every clear day in summer than I have yet seen in Italy; though they certainly are very near ours. It is only to those who are accustomed to British clouds and fogs that they are remarkable.

The peripatetic grinders of music upon hand-organs so common in all our towns are usually Italians, and I supposed that Street Music here was of much the same kind. This is a mistake. I have not seen such a thing in Italy or the South of France. You have universally the Harp, commonly two players in concert, and very frequently a violin also for an accompaniment, and the music is always creditable. At Arignon, the very land of the Troubadours, we were serenaded at dinner with a concert of harps, guitars &c. - but when they called for the coppers we found, - shame to this degenerate age - that the Troubadours were all women, and of the most unromantic appearance possible. The patois of all this part of France and of Piedmont, however is the same as the language in which the Troubadours are written, and one who understands the patois as now spoken, can read the former without difficulty.

The Italian language is very soft and musical, far more pleasant to the ear than the deep nasal tones of the French.

Florence 9<sup>th</sup> May, Thursday evening.

I left Leghorn in a Voiturin with three other passengers about seven o'clock last evening, and after various stops on the way and passing an unpleasant night, with very little sleep, I arrived at Florence about 7 o'clock this morning, a distance of between 40 and 50 miles as near as I can ascertain. This is Ascension Day in the Romish Calendar, and it is kept in Florence as an especial holiday, the shops being closed almost without exception. In one respect it happened unfortunately for me, as it was impossible to get admission into any of the galleries, so I spent the morning in a general survey of the town and in visiting the various churches, of which there are many that are well worth a visit, either for their beauty or magnificence, or for the tombs and paintings or sculpture they contain. Finding myself overcome with sleep, I broke off and went to bed, and now I resume my pen at

Padua, 13<sup>th</sup> May, 1839.

I cannot speak of Florence with such high admiration as Rogers, who commences his beautiful lines on the subject with—

"Of all the fairest cities of the Earth"  
"None is so fair as Florence."

But, arriving from Leghorn you do not get a fair view of the city, nor of the valley of the Arno, and the general aspect of the streets, like that of all Italian towns, is not pleasing. Yet there are some beautiful buildings, and many objects of the highest interest demand your attention; and I must say that the place grew more and more charming to me up to the moment I left it; and at my departure ~~at sunset~~ <sup>just after</sup> sunset, the distant view of the city and the valley of the Arno from the heights near Fiesole was enchanting, heightened doubtless by the fresh recollection of the many interesting objects I had just parted from, and the rich associations connected with them. After getting comfortably established in the Locanda grande della Porta Rossa, and taking my breakfast I sallied out on Thursday, as I said above, to find my way to the lions as well as I could. I passed the ancient Ducal Palace (Palazzo Vecchio), a vast square gloomy building that could tell strange stories of the olden time, if our accounts are true (vid. the story "Don Garzia in Rogers' Italy!"), a very high building itself, but crowned with a lofty and slender tower which rises to a dizzy height. Soon after I found the Duomo, or Cathedral, a very large building in the Barberic or Tuscan style, of which I first saw a specimen in the Church of St. Lorenzo at Genoa, and a again a much more perfect one in the Duomo of Pisa, of which I have sent prints. But this of Florence is larger than the former (put together, almost as large as St.

Paul's of London, — is the very perfection of this style, singular, but most grand and majestic in appearance. Its outer walls are encrusted with black and white polished marble, which gives it a strange chequered aspect. I have a print which gives a good idea of one view, and that not the best that could be chosen. The facade at the opposite extremity was never finished. The building was commenced in the eleventh century, but was not finished until about the middle of the thirteenth. The dome is very large and high, and was greatly admired by Michael Angelo (who was a Florentine) the man who was at once the greatest painter, sculptor, and architect of his own or any succeeding age; and there is a little story told of it that I may mention. When Michael Angelo set out from Florence to build the dome of St. Peter's, he turned back again and again to contemplate that of this cathedral, and as he pursued his journey he said "Come te non voglio! Meglio di te non posso" (Like thee I will not build one: — Better than thee I cannot). The Campanille stands close to one end, but like that of Pisa is separate: Like that also it leans to one side, but not so much. It is not round but quadrangular; it is built of marbles of three or four different colors, and contains beautiful bas-reliefs & figures in niches. It rises to height of 280 feet, nearly of the same diameter throughout, and it is certainly the most graceful thing I ever saw. The Baptistery stands near it, but is much older. It is octangular, the roof forming a broad dome: the bronze doors were exceedingly admired by Michael Angelo, and they are indeed beautiful; the reliefs are in the same style as those of the Duomo of Pisa. I heard a. h. Mass. in the Duomo — almost from beginning to end, and was heartily tired of it before it was finished. It was celebrated by a bishop, and of course in grand style. I got a place very close to the bishop, and was glad to see that it was as tiresome for him as for me, as I observed him to yawn frequently, even when he was taking a part in some solemn ceremony. I was more taken with the emeralds in the bishop's mitre than anything else. The chanting and music of the service is always fine, but there is too much of it. My next as may be imagined, was to the church of Santa Croce, a large, not handsome but solemn building which has well been called the Westminster Abbey of Italy. Among many others of less celebrity — "here repose Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his, The starry Galileo, with his woes; Here Machiavelli's earth returned to whence it rose." The tombs of the two latter are most rich, as if to make amends for the cruel persecution they suffered while living by their native city, which afterwards took so much pains to honor them. I copied the inscription on their tombs, but I will not give you that of Galileo here, as I have since obtained a little sketch. That of Machiavelli is brief enough. It is simply —

Tanto nomini nullum par elogium

Nicolaus Machiavelli

and the date of his death is recorded beneath. The next day, while on our way to call on Prof. Amici, Mr. Sloane showed me the house in which he lived and died, as a marble slab fixed to the wall informs us, and from the Observatory a little afterwards, the tower of the house at Arcetri (a mile near Fiesole) was pointed out to me. It was here that Galileo was sent by the Inquisition, by those who would not look through his glass lest they should imbricate the heresy; here he lived and continued his observations for the rest of his life, in full sight of his native city, but not permitted to enter except in his coffin. In the notes to Rogers' Italy, a letter is given which Galileo received about this time from Kepler; also a very neat and cautious note from Pascal "They may issue their decrees," says he, "it is to no purpose. If the earth is really turning round, all mankind together could not keep it from turning, or keep themselves from turning with it."

I am glad that I never read Rogers Italy until now, when it is my traveling companion, and I enjoy his simple and truthful sketches much more than I otherwise should have done. In his few stanzas upon Florence he mentions the visit that Milton made to Galileo so prettily that as I know you have not the work I must extract a few lines.

Nearer we hail

Thy sunny slope Arcetri, sung of Old  
For its green wine; dearer to me, to most,  
As dwelt on by that great Astronomer,  
Seven years a Prisoner at the city-gate,  
Set in but in his grave-clothes. Sacred he  
His villa (justly was it called the stem),  
Sacred the lawn, where many a cypress threw  
Its length of shadow, while he watched the stars!  
Sacred the vineyard, where, while yet his sight  
Glissened, at blush of morn he dressed his vines  
Chanting aloud in gaiety of heart

\* That may hardly be said; as he was blind during the last years of his life

Some verse of Ariosto! Then, unseen,  
In manly beauty Milton stood before him  
Gazing with reverent awe - Milton, his guest,  
Just then come forth, all life and enterprise;  
He in his old age and extremity,  
Blind, at noon-day exploring with his staff;  
His eyes upturned as to the golden sun,  
His eye-balls idly rolling. Little then  
Did Galileo think whom he received,  
That in his hand he held the hand of one  
Who could requite him, who would spread his name  
O'er lands and seas, - great as himself, may greater;  
Milton as little that in him he saw,  
As in a glass what he himself should be,  
Destined so soon to fall on evil days  
And evil tongues, - so soon, alas, to live  
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,  
And solitude."

There is also a magnificent monument to Dante; which is however a Cenotaph as Dante also died an exile, at Ravenna. Among other churches which I have nothing particularly to say about I went to St. Maria Novella, quite ordinary in external appearance, but the interior was highly praised by Michael Angelo, who called it his Sposa. It is different from any other I have seen in Italy, being a pure and light Gothic, like the early Norman architecture.

Finding little more that I could do to-day I then called at the residence of Mr. Sloane (a descendant of Sir Hans Sloane of famous memory) who resides in the Bontrouline Palace, and first finding him at home left a note of introduction written by two ladies! Mrs. Booth and Miss Booth and also a letter entrusted to my care by Michel. I called also at the Botanic Garden, but Mr. Targionia Torretta was not at home and the garden was of no great consequence. While at dinner Mr. Sloane called to welcome me to Florence, and to take me out of the city to the Campagna, - lawns and beautiful pleasure-ground and groves skirting the Arno for a mile or two, which are thrown open to the public and is the favorite drive or promenade. Almost the whole city was there and I never saw a more pleasant place. The roads were thronged

with carriages from the barouch of the Grand Duke to the Peasant's cart, all on terms of perfect equality. The Grand Duke passed us twice: He mingles much with the people, is accessible to all, and is greatly beloved. The government tho' despotic is paternal, the people are not burdened with taxes, and are contented and industrious. The difference between Tuscany and the Papal States is manifest enough. But I must hasten with my narrative.

Early the next morning (Friday) I called on Mr. Sloane, looked at his garden, where he has many fine things. We then crossed the Arno to the other side of the town, called on Prof. Amici, who removed here from Modena a few years since, and has charge of the Grand Duke's Observatory. He was very obliging, showed me his Microscopes, which he thinks unrivalled, but I don't, and then the Observatory, saw all the instruments, peeped through his telescope, and from the top of the tower had a most beautiful panoramic view of Florence and the surrounding country. We then passed through the Museum of Natural History, which is in the same building, and is prettily arranged, saw the famous flowers & fruits done in wax (but not the figures which represent the Plague, which were in the anatomical Museum adjoining and I did not care to see them); among them some recent ~~pieces~~ <sup>models</sup> made under Amici's superintendance to illustrate his discoveries &c. They were wonderfully fine, and would be useful in a class-room. Amici is a good observer with the Microscope, but his anatomical or physiological notions are in some cases very wide of the mark and quite surprised me.

On leaving Mr. Sloane and myself separated, he going to fulfil some engagement, and I to the Palazzo Pitti, as it is still called from the founder, tho' it early passed into the hands of the Medici family who finished it, and now it is the Ducal residence.

I must tell you by the way that I should have seen a remarkable person in Florence, had she not been sick. Sloane is very intimate with her and wished me to see her: - she is the ex-queen of Naples, the widow of Murat and the sister of Napoleon.

I will pass over the Pitti Palace, by simply saying that I saw very much more to interest me than I anticipated. The picture gallery is large, occupying an extensive suite of rooms, and is the best collection I have seen, quite superior to any one in Rome. It is almost wholly composed of the works Raphael,

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Correggio, Titian, Carlo Dolce, Barbieri, Van Dyck, Rembrandt  
(one of Michael Angelo) Tintoretto, a few of Murillo - in fact it  
contains specimens of all the great Masters, and a good portion  
of their finest works. After passing through such a collection one  
cannot avoid being a bit of a connoisseur. Some rooms  
contain rich work in Florentine Mosaic which is very different  
from Roman - the bathing-room thro, which I passed is a most  
luxurious little apartment. The Venus of Canova is in one  
of the galleries. Leaving this I next went to the famous  
Royal gallery, a collection almost as large as that of the  
Vatican, tho, much less rich except in paintings, bronzes &c.  
Here is the so much celebrated Venus de Medicis! which I  
suppose merits all the praise bestowed upon it. It is beauti-  
ful certainly, but I must say that I was not so wonderfully  
struck with it. I admired it far less than the Gladiator, the  
Apollo and the Laocoon, at Rome, which have meaning in  
them, whereas this is simply a beautiful, but almost unmean-  
ing figure. It is as modest I must say as a figure without a  
rag of drapery could be, far more so than the two paintings  
of Titian which hang in the same room, and which, after  
all I have seen I was a little astonished to see ladies (many of them  
English too) looking at with unmoved countenances. The same  
room contains three or four of Raphael best easel pictures,  
and sweet things they are, and a few others, the very best works  
of the greatest masters. In another gallery I saw the Flora  
of Titian, which a painter was copying (You see painters everywhere  
engaged in copying the best pictures) which pleased me greatly. The  
smiling countenance is the prettiest I ever saw. The engraving  
of it I sent with the parcel from Marseilles will give you  
only a faint idea of it. I had not time to see the galle-  
ry of painters painted by themselves before the hour arrived  
for closing the gallery. I had seen all besides this that I  
cared for; but when I left I expected to make another visit  
the next day. On returning to the Hotel Monera I learned that  
I could not get a place on the Courier next day, - that the  
Diligence which left at mid-day, did not arrive at Bologna  
until Sunday afternoon, - so I engaged a Calvoletto to start  
with me after dinner, arranged my affairs, called on Mr. Sloane  
to bid him an unexpected adieu, dined at the table d'hote at  
five and at dark I was climbing the outskirts of the Appennines.  
I would have liked to call upon our Sculptor - Iscenough to see  
how the Statue of Washington is coming on, but had not time.

At sun-rise I was on the mountain-summits, among the clouds, which a strong wind for a moment blew aside, and gave me some magnificent views. We journeyed for some hours in this elevated region, but at length crossed the Tuscan provinces and were once in the country of His Holiness. Just as we commenced our descent, which is very abrupt a dense fog enveloped us and it began to rain. In consequence of this I lost the view which you often have of the Adriatic and the Mediterranean at the same time, as well as the plains of the Po on the North. This was the first rain I encountered, excepting a few drops at Rome since I left Lyons; so you may judge of the dryness of the climate in the South of France and Italy. It is very different, however, near the mountains. At length after a long and rapid descent we arrived at the foot of the mountain and stopped at a comfortable inn to take my dinner and breakfast at once, it being about three o'clock. Several carriages were then before us, and just before I left another arrived, bringing with it a most genuine Yankee, who amused me excessively. It seems that he came out in the Great Western, a few weeks ago, had seen what he thought worth seeing in London and Paris, had been even to Naples, and was now on his way from Rome to Switzerland and expected to reach London to return by a steam-ship in a few days. But the feat upon which he prided himself above all, was that he had ascended Vesuvius and came back again, in a few minutes, but in an inconceivably short space of time, and very much quicker than had ever been done before! to the great wonderment of the guides, as he said, and as I do not doubt. This was his chef d'oeuvre, and I assure you he felt quite proud of it. I laughed most heartily at the absurdity of the thing, until I reflected how rapidly I had been doing the sights myself, and felt that I might justly come in for a share of the ridicule. In this day's journey I think I outdid the Yankee, for arriving at Bologna about five o'clock, I immediately made arrangements for going on to Ferrara the same night, and this I accomplished. I had but two or three hours to spend at Bologna, a city famous for its University and its sausages; the former decayed almost to nothing, the latter still in great demand, diffusing their insupportable garlic odor from every table. I visited all the large

churches, took some coffee, and before nine o'clock was on my way through the vast plain watered by the Po, which like most large rivers, branches near its mouth into several streams. The lad who drove me did not know the road very well, and lost his road several times, so that instead of arriving before day-break it was six o'clock in the morning when we entered Ferrara. Indeed he came near losing his horse as well as the road; for while I was sleeping soundly in the carriage I was roused by a prodigious clatter, and jumping out as quick as I could, found that he had driven into a heap of round stones deposited to mend the road, the horse had slipped and was lying flat upon his back in the bottom of the ditch. With much ado we liberated him from the carriage and lifted him out of the ditch, repaired the injury to the harness as well as we could with bits of rope, and were again on our way. I have wondered since how I could ride thus through the night, with only a boy with me, through a country which some years ago would not have been deemed safe. But I felt not the slightest alarm; and slept as sound as possible.

Ferrara is famous for <sup>possessing</sup> ~~having~~ the tomb and Chair of Ariosto, but except this is as uninteresting as you can imagine. It was Sunday, and I spent the day within doors as well as I could.

By making a very early ride I succeeded in reaching Padua at 10 o'clock this morning, visited the University so famed of old, the churches, the splendid Caffè Pedrocchi, the Botanic Garden, ~~then~~ the most ancient in Italy, of Alpinus, the elder and the younger and Pontedera were Directors. It is now under the care of Visiani, to whom I brought a letter from Bentham, and who politely showed me all I wished to see. The University is a queer old place indeed, and the lecture-rooms the most dark, gloomy and inconspicuous places you can conceive; every thing is as old as the 15th Century. I wish I could describe the Anatomical theatre, which is the most curious specimen of antiquity I have seen. The Museum of Natural History is so-so. There is still a goodly number of students, but nothing to what there was in the olden time. The Duomo is a small affair, but the church of St. Antonio is like a mosque, the most characteristic building I ever saw, - with its seven or eight balloon-shaped domes of various sizes, and

three or four tall and slender minarets. I am sorry I can't get a decent print of it. The interior is noble, and very rich in tombs and shrines and sculptures. Here are tombs of many of the old Professors.

The Church of St. Augustine is in the same style, and not much inferior. - - - Mine is very much that I wish to write but I have not the time nor the strength to write longer, and must sleep. To understand the full luxury of a bed, you should sleep without one, as I have done very often of late, Good-night.

Venice, on board Steam-boat for Trieste lying at Anchor, Wednesday Evening, 15<sup>th</sup> May, 1839.

For nearly two days I have been "a looker-on in Venice, a strange place, as unlike any other city of Europe as can be, unless Constantinople resemble it in some respects. It is more like some place you visit in dreams, some creation of fancy than a real, earthly city; if it can be called earthly, which scarcely stands upon earth.

We left Padua at five o'clock in the morning, yesterday, by the Diligence, passing along the banks of a canal, bordered with numerous villas; all of them had been fine, some very magnificent; but they are now decaying. The clouds prevented me from obtaining a view of the Tiberian Alps, which bound the view on the north, but I hope to make up for this tomorrow, which will give some amends for our detention here: - for you must know that the Steam-boat was to have left at 9 o'clock this evening, and I expected to have been in Trieste in the morning; but the day has been stormy, and the water is a little rough, so forsooth the boat is to remain until morning, but as it is to start very early I have remained on board, where I have a comfortable place to sleep, and a quiet hour to write to thee.

Oh I wish you could see Venice! - and the dear girls whenever I see anything particularly queer, I think of them at once, and wish for them to enjoy it with me. And here every thing is strange, canals for streets, gondolas for coaches; - not a horse to be seen in the city,



except the celebrated bronze gilt steeds of St. Mark; -  
palaces of barbaric magnificence, splendid churches; peo-  
ple of all nations and tongues, Christians, Turks, and  
Jews. Surely there is nothing like it. The view from  
Fusani, on the main-land, which was the first I obtained, ~~was~~  
was charming; -

--- " from out the wave her structures rise,  
" As from the stroke of an enchanter's wand."

My new favourite Rogers gives you the idea, as far as lan-  
guage can convey it, in few words. --

There is a glorious city in the Sea.  
The Sea is in the broad, the narrow streets,  
Ebbing and flowing; and the salt sea-weed  
Clings to the marble of her palaces.  
No track of men, no footsteps to and fro,  
Lead to her gates. The path lies o'er the Sea,  
Invisible; and from the land we merit,  
As to a floating City - steering in,  
And gliding up her streets as in a dream,  
So smoothly, silently, - by many a dome,  
Mosque-like, and many a stately portico,  
The statues ranged along an azure sky;  
By many a pile in more than Eastern pride,  
Of Old the residence of Merchant-kings;  
The fronts of some, though Time has shattered them,  
Still glowing with the richest hues of art,  
As though the wealth within them had run o'er.

You will wonder at the comparison; but the distant view of  
Venice reminded me strongly of New York, as you approach from  
Amboy. The Gondola that brought us stopped in the Grand  
Canal near the Rialto, or rather the bridge of the Rialto, for  
the name properly belongs to the island; and in crossing this bridge  
during the day, I found some of the little shops still occupied  
~~at~~ money changes, and I saw more than one hard Jewish coun-  
tenance that might ~~have~~ <sup>set</sup> for a picture of Shylock. This  
part of the town is unpleasant; although the Canals are  
lined with what were once stately palaces, which now look  
as if about to sink again into the water. While on my way  
to a Hotel, I came abruptly upon a view that seemed like enchant-  
ment; the Piazza of St. Mark, a large quadrangle, three sides

enclosed by a magnificent range like the Palais Royal, on the fourth the Church of St. Mark, and adjoining it the Palace of the Doges, scarcely less magnificent, and in an equally Oriental style. In front is the Campanille, taller than that of Florence, but not handsome. As you turn out of the quadrangle in full front of the Palace you see the two granite columns, one of them surmounted with the winged Lion; and you stand on the mole, with the most superb view of sea and city, shipping, churches and palaces before and around you. I never expect again to see anything like it. I have walked over this ground again and again; and you are never wearied with the sight. Passing along the front of the Ducal Palace which looks toward the harbor, you cross a canal and see a narrow and close bridge, high up in the air connecting the palace with a gloomy prison. This I knew at once for the memorable Bridge of Sighs; and I afterwards saw enough to know that it deserved the name. My Hotel (the Albergo Reale, for I was unable to get a room in the Hotel de l'Europe) was very near here, and its windows command a magnificent view. I sallied out immediately to visit the Ducal Palace, entered the court, took a grey-headed solemn-looking old man for a guide, ascended the Giant's Staircase, at the top of which Marino Faliero was beheaded, saw the holes in the wall formerly covered by the open lion's mouths, where anonymous accusations were lodged; thence ascended into the halls and galleries, the great Chamber, & the adjoining one round which near the ceiling are ranged the portraits of some two or three hundred Doges. The walls and ceilings of these and all the other rooms of state, the Chamber of the Inquisition, the Senate Chamber, — the Doges Chamber of State &c. — are covered with pictures of the Venetian school, which are so much admired for their coloring, and the light and shade, but I will not trouble you with them.

We then took torches to explore the prisons; not those of the building opposite, but the cells in the palace itself where state prisoners were confined, and from which very few ever came out alive. They are close gloomy dungeons, perfectly dark as are the passages that lead to them, sunk in the thick walls of the building, a small hole in the wall for admitting food gives access to the damp air of the passages; and a small wooden pallet for a bed is the only furniture. There is one range just under the roof: the others are lower, and

are situated in several tiers, of which the lowest are two stories beneath the surface of the water in the canal. I descended down nearly to the level of the water, but those below are now blocked it; indeed it is said they were destroyed or concealed as much as possible on the arrival of the French in the city; but the stone floor of the passage resounded to our tread, showing that there were yet others beneath, more damp and close if possible, into which no ray of light or breath of fresh air could ever penetrate. I saw the traces of the arrangement for strangling the poor wretches in their cells; and the place where others were beheaded by a kind of guillotine, the holes in the floor for carrying off the blood: — it makes one shudder even to think of them. After seeing this place I am free to say that I felt no particle of regret, but rather joy, at witnessing the decay of this once splendid and powerful republic, of that name may be applied to what was in reality always the very worst form of despotism. I stood at the foot of the Bridge of Sighs, but the door is barred and we were not permitted to enter the passage to the other side, and the cell which occupied a part of it and where the prisoners condemned to death were strangled, is now walled up.

I went next into the Cathedral of St. Mark, which I have since visited nearly a dozen times, I have some prints which give a very good representation of the exterior. Over the portico are the famous horses, which, with the winged Lion are again in their places after their journey to Paris. Indeed nearly all the best pictures shown me here and at Rome, were taken to Paris by Napoleon, and it is almost a pity that this superb collection was broken up at his overthrow. The horses are Grecian and very ancient: ~~it is supposed that~~ they are supposed to have belonged to the Temple of the Sun at Corinth, but this is uncertain; but the Venetians brought them from Constantinople long, long ago, with a vast quantity of other spoils. St. Mark's is almost wholly built of pillars and marbles brought from the East. I spare you a detailed account of my movements to-day and yesterday, of the fine churches, enough to furnish Cathedrals to half a dozen cities, of the Arsenal: its ship-yard, the antique lions, the public garden, the Armenian Convent, the gondolas and my rides therein, I have enjoyed it greatly and have laid up a stock for future

enjoyment, for I shall read hereafter of Venice with  
greater interest. One who travels as rapidly as I do, if  
he would enjoy the full benefit of his journey, should know  
almost everything before he leaves home. The true way,  
for those who have time and means sufficient, is to study  
the history of each place on the spot with all its move-  
ments and relics around you. So more might be learned  
in one month than in a year at home. If I had (what  
I am not like to have) a family of children to bring up, money  
sufficient for the purpose, and no other duties to prevent,  
I think I would educate them in this peripatetic way.  
— But now to bed.

Thursday evening, 16<sup>th</sup> May.

I am still here in Venice. The first thing I heard as I  
awoke this morning was that we should not sail until  
evening, — which would have been annoying, but it is all  
one for me whether I arrive in Trieste this evening or to-  
morrow morning. Could I have been there this morning  
as I expected, I should have been one day sooner in Vienna.  
It has rained nearly all day. I have been wandering  
about the town, but it is wet and unpleasant. I found  
it pleasanter to spend the greater part of the afternoon  
in a cafe, and read all the Parisian newspapers I  
could find. I get American news in a most round-  
about way. I find here Galignani's Messenger, which  
is mostly made up of extracts from London newspapers,  
which now and then give a scrap of American in-  
telligence. I learn that the Great Western has arri-  
ved at Bristol, but have seen no news brought by her.  
Indeed I find no news, by which I feel confident  
that all is well in the world at large on your side  
of the water; but I want to hear from those I love.  
I shall be ready to kiss the hand that gives me a  
letter. I wonder if I shall find one at ~~Vienna~~?

We are to start at nine o'clock. The rain is  
over, but it is still cloudy. I have been for some days  
in Austrian dominions, but I wish to be in Austria  
itself. It cleared up a little just at sunset,  
and gave me, from the deck of the vessel, a most beautiful  
view of the town and harbor, with hundreds of gondolas  
gliding swiftly ~~and~~ through the water in every direction. —

Didst ever see a Gondola? They are very long and narrow,  
and very sharp at both ends, which rise out of the water.

Take



I was about to give you a sketch, but I remember you will find some in the two or three prints of Venice I send. They are all painted black; and the covered portion in the middle being with black cloth, furnished with blinds &c. and within fine cushioned seats for two to four persons. They are so light and well formed that a single gondolier will urge them along with great swiftness.

Did you ever see Punch and Judy? Just on shore and within a few yards, a fellow is exhibiting them, even in better style than usual, to the great delight of an assembled crowd. I first saw this famous couple at Paris. But in Venice it is done capitally, every evening, as I sat in a Cafe, the man sets up his little establishment, and these two interesting personages perform their parts. I long for the girls to be with me to see it, for I assure you it would be great fun for them. The

Musicians here are very good. A party stops at the door of the Cafe; a man with a violin, his wife and son each with a guitar, and they perform several airs exceedingly well; the woman sometimes accompanying with her voice. She enters the Cafe with the little wooden cup in her hand, and is well satisfied with a Kreutzer (about half a cent) from those who choose to give, and a sweet gracia, in the softest Italian expression her thanks.

There is one Cafe here frequented almost exclusively by Turks, who sit smoking their large pipes with such an air of ridiculous gravity. Their turbans or the red caps they often wear, their flowing robes and their mether garments, which are some thing between pantaloons and petticoats, are very queer. But it is getting quite dark, and there are signs which indicate that our voyage is about to commence. I had almost forgotten to tell you how

greatly I was amused just before coming on board, to notice in a Venetian Newspaper, a printed notice of the arrival of all the travellers the day previous, my own name among the rest, with my residence profession &c. given in full. A list of those who leave Venice is also published daily, so that my name will doubtless figure again in the Venetian prints. This will serve as a small specimen of the surveillance under which Travellers are placed in the Austrian dominions.

Trieste, Friday Evening,

To give you another specimen of the surveillance of the Austrian police, the subject with which I closed the last page: - I asked the American Consul here if he had received any news from the great Westerns, and found that he knew not of its arrival: which was thus explained, All the foreign newspapers on their arrival here, are taken to the police, retained one day, during which they are carefully examined, to see if they contain anything which reflects upon the government, or tell any news that the people ought not to know. Happy people, with such a paternal government, taking infinite pains that they do not hurt themselves.

I arrived here early this morning, after a rough passage, and was doomed to experience some disappointments rather trying to my patience now that I desire to get along on my route so fast. First of all I found that all the places (there are all) in the public conveyance for Vienna were taken. So I could not leave to-day.

Indeed, I might not; for though I felt willing to give up the opportunity of making the acquaintance of two botanists here, friends of Bentham, yet I did not like to fail to see the most remarkable grotto in the world at Adelsberg, and the chance of seeing Prof. Unger at Trieste also, which would be inevitable, as we go directly through to Vienna (about 350 miles) and are obliged to pay the whole distance even if you stop on the road. Could I have got the place however I should have gone, and should have been at Vienna on Sunday morning at sunrise. To go on Saturday was out of the question, as that would keep me Sunday on the road, and besides these places were taken. So my plan was settled to stay here until Monday, where I may enjoy moreover the privilege of attending worship in an English Protestant Chapel, to take my place in the mail coach for Monday afternoon, and to take the opportunity which I would not have had for purposely, but which will repay me in part for the delay, - that is, to see the great fête, which takes place yearly (Whit-Sunday, that is on Monday) in the grotto of Adelsberg. - When the peasants of the whole country

round assemble, and have a dance in one of the large apartments of the grotto, which is then finely illuminated and may be seen to the greatest advantage. This immense cavern has been explored to a distance of more than two miles, and they think it is still larger. We intend to send our luggage by the mail coach, which will reach here in the evening, while we (that is to say, a young American artist who came on with me from Venice, and is to be my companion to Vienna) are to take a private conveyance early in the morning for Adelsberg, and spend the afternoon at the grotto. So leaving my companion to make the necessary arrangements I called out to deliver my letter to Monsieur le Magistrate Tommasini, who being engaged for the day at a meeting of his brother Magistrates, took me to Brasolotto an apothecary, and good Botanist, who seemed delighted to have the opportunity of showing kindness to a friend of Bentham; and we arranged to make an excursion after dinner to the Monte Spaccato, which overlooks the town. We had seen the American Consul in the mean time, (an Englishman, who ~~had~~ holds the office perhaps in virtue of his wife who is a Baltimorean); we accepted an invitation to take tea at his house, where there was to be one or two other Americans. To the Monte Spaccato we went, and hard work we had to climb it. I made a pretty collection of interesting plants, and got back to the hotel, tired and soiled, just in time to keep my engagement at the Consul's. We found quite a party there, very pretty young ladies, the Consul's wife very intelligent and refined; the establishment very genteel. - During the evening one young lady executed some crashing music upon a loud piano; and another after stops and hesitations, which I thought very affected, sung one or two Italian songs. I had the opportunity of hearing Italian spoken by the lips of very pretty young ladies, so that I could perceive what a soft and flowing language it is. I got away as soon as I could, and though too much fatigued to put my word in any sort of order or to write legibly, I have scribbled a page or two for you.

Trieste; Saturday evening, 18<sup>th</sup> May, 1839.

As misfortunes never come single, I found this morning that our places were not secured in the Mail-coach for Monday. The fellow who was to arrange this business found, after getting our passports in order, that there was one place only left, and supposing that we were certainly to go together did not secure that. It was immediately arranged between us that I was to have the place, but on arriving at the office I had the mortification to find it already taken. For an hour or so we made various plans, ~~and~~ negotiated with a Vetturino, but were stopped by the information we received, that they would be five days on the road to Gratz, from whence to Vienna it would require at least two days more by the same kind of conveyance, or 27 hours in the Mail coach if we could get a place in it. We found that the quickest way left for us was to take places for Tuesday by the Mail, and go on Monday by a private conveyance to Adelsberg, as we had intended, where we shall have a day longer than we desire; and these places we were fortunate enough to secure. So I cannot expect to reach Vienna before Friday Morning of next week! I had hoped to reach that place by the 20<sup>th</sup>.

It rained hard all the morning so that Botanic being out of the question, so I put my collection of yesterday in press, visited Biasoletto, and after dinner met Sormasini, who has given me a very pretty collection of plants of the country. Various affairs relative to the journey have occupied me the rest of the day, and I am now hastily to close these sheets, and to send them by an American ship, the Edward, which is to sail shortly for New York. The Captain seems to be an honest and true Yankee, and I shall trust him with a parcel or two. As I am at the end of the sheet I must say adieu, and add a few words on the envelope.

Ever Yours: A. Gray